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Notes from the Director No. 31

4 October 1978

SECURITY INSPECTION PROGRAM

I should like to convey to you directly some thoughts relating to my decision to initiate an inspection program involving all briefcases, handbags, packages and other material being removed from Agency buildings in the Headquarters area. This new program will serve to improve our handling and protection of classified material, especially by inhibiting its unauthorized removal from Agency buildings.

Originally I had hoped to initiate the program on 11 September 1978. Because of the seriousness of this issue, I delayed implementation to permit further study and extensive discussions on the merits of the action. Based on the results, I have reaffirmed my decision and will institute the program on 10 October 1978.

I am confident that the vast majority of Agency employees, who represent the best that this country has to offer, take their security responsibility seriously and do not remove classified documents from Agency premises unless authorized to do so. Unfortunately, evidence over the past year reveals that a number of our employees are taking classified, often acutely sensitive, materials from the office. In most cases, such removal has been for the commendable purpose of using the material at home in an effort to get the job done, but the risks are too great for us to condone this.

No matter how well-intentioned the removal of classified material may be, the risk of exposure or compromise is too great to be permitted at all. In view of my responsibility to protect such information, a lack of action on my part would be inexcusable.

I ask the understanding, cooperation and support of each of you in seeing that this program is successful. While there may be, from time to time, minor inconveniences, it is a small price to pay when weighed against the important responsibility we all have to safeguard our Nation's vital information.

STANSFIELD TURNER
Director

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